

## Message Text

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ORIGIN EA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SNM-02 DEAE-00 USIE-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00

CIAE-00 DODE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 PA-02 RSC-01 PRS-01

SP-02 NSC-05 SS-15 IO-10 JUSE-00 SY-04 TRSE-00 OES-05

OMB-01 PM-03 INRE-00 AID-05 IGA-01 /075 R

DRAFTED BY EA/TB:CLSTERMER:CB

APPROVED BY EA/RA:WTHOMAS

S/NM:JRRAFFERTY

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O R 170050Z JAN 75

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY RANGOON IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY BANGKOK IMMEDIATE

INFO AMCONSUL HONG KONG

AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE

UNCLAS STATE 011517

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: OVIP (WOLFF, LESTER)

SUBJECT: WOLFF CALLS FOR STATE DEPARTMENT ACTION ON GOLDEN  
TRIANGLE HEROIN

FOLLOWING IS TEXT OF PRESS STATEMENT RELEASED BY CONGRES-  
SMAN WOLFF ON JAN. 16.

1. TEXT: I HAVE CALLED THIS PRESS CONFERENCE TO ALERT  
YOU TO A NEW SOURCE OF HEROIN FOR THE AMERICAN ADDICT,  
WHICH HAS THE POTENTIAL OF SUPPLYING OR CREATING A MARKET  
OF EPIDEMIC PROPORTIONS -- SIMILAR TO THE SIZE OF THAT  
WHICH EXISTED BEFORE WE CURBED THE FLOW OF OPIUM FROM  
TURKEY. I AM SPEAKING OF THE TRI-BORDER AREA OF BURMA,  
LAOS AND THAILAND -- THE INFAMOUS GOLDEN TRIANGLE, ALWAYS  
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KNOWN AS A SOURCE FOR THE WORLD MARKET, BUT HERETOFORE

NEVER CONSIDERED TO BE A MAJOR DIRECT SOURCE FOR OUR OWN COUNTRY. I ALSO WANT TO ANNOUNCE THAT DUE TO THE ACTION OF THE UNITED STATES AND THE COOPERATION OF SEVERAL NATIONS IN THAT PART OF THE WORLD, THE TRAFFICKING OF HEROIN IN SOUTHEAST ASIA HAS COMPLETELY CHANGED FROM THE PATTERNS THAT HAVE BEEN PREVIOUSLY OBSERVED.

IT IS NOW ESTIMATED THAT 10 TO 15 PERCENT OF THE 700 TO 1,000 TONS OF OPIUM WHICH IS GROWN IN THE GOLDEN

TRIANGLE WILL BE SMUGGLED INTO THE UNITED STATES. THE CONSTRUCTIVE EFFORTS OF THAI NARCOTICS OFFICIALS AND THE REMOVAL BY THE THAI GOVERNMENT OF SEVERAL HIGH-RANKING GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS WHO WERE INVOLVED WITH DRUG TRAFFICKING HAS BROUGHT AN END TO THE OPIUM-CARRYING MULE CARAVANS WHICH BROUGHT RAW OPIUM FROM THE GOLDEN TRIANGLE THROUGH THAILAND. THE OPIUM WAS THEN BROUGHT, LARGELY BY TRAWLER, TO HONG KONG FOR WORLDWIDE DISTRIBUTION.

3. NOW THE RAW OPIUM IS REFINED IN SECRET LABORATORIES NEAR THE BURMESE BORDER IN THE MOUNTAINOUS JUNGLE AREAS OF THE GOLDEN TRIANGLE. THESE LABS ARE HIDDEN IN INACCESSABLE REGIONS, AND ARE CLOSE ENOUGH TO THE BURMESE BORDER THAT WHEN TAI NARCOTICS OFFICIALS DISCOVER A LAB, THE OPERATORS ARE ABLE TO RETREAT INTO THE SANCTUARIES IN BURMA. TO UNDERSTAND THE IMPLICATIONS OF THESE LABS, YOU SHOULD KNOW THAT RAW OPIUM LOSES 90 PERCENT OF ITS BULK SIZE WHEN IT IS REFINED INTO HEROIN. THIS INCREASES THE DIFFICULTY OF INTERCEPTING THE DRUG MANY TIMES OVER, AND, HENCE, THE IMPORTANCE OF CONTAINING THE POPPIES WHILE THEY ARE IN THE FIELDS. NO LONGER CAN WE INTERCEPT THE HUGE MULE CARAVANS WHICH CARRIED TREMENDOUS QUANTITIES OF THE OPIUM. NOW, THE REFINED HEROIN IS CARRIED BY INDIVIDUALS WITH BODY PACKS DOWN FROM THE GOLDEN TRIANGLE, AND EVENTUALLY MAKES ITS WAY BY AIR, SEA, AND COURIER TO HONG KONG AND MALAYSIA; BUT IN THE FORM OF NUMBER THREE OR NUMBER FOUR HEROIN, AND NOT RAW OPIUM. THE HONG KONG AUTHORITIES ARE COOPERATING, BUT THEY HAVE ALMOST AN IMPOSSIBLE TASK WHEN ONE UNCLASSIFIED

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RECOGNIZES THE AMOUNT OF CARGO AND THE NUMBER OF PASSENGERS WHO PASS THROUGH HONG KONG EACH YEAR. FROM HONG KONG, AND OTHER PORTS IN THAT PART OF THE WORLD, THE HEROIN MAKES ITS WAY TO THE WESTERN MARKET. TWO MAJOR STOPPING POINTS FOR THE HEROIN ARE HOLLAND AND MEXICO. BOTH OF THESE NATIONS CREATE MAJOR PROBLEMS FOR THE UNITED STATES. THE AVAILABILITY OF HIGH-GRADE, LOW-COST HEROIN IN AMSTERDAM IS CAUSING A DRUG PROBLEM

FOR OUR TROOPS STATIONED IN WESTERN EUROPE, JUST AS THE CHEAP SUPPLY IN SOUTHEAST ASIA FUNNELED DOWN TO OUR TROOPS IN VIETNAM, AND DECREASED THEIR FIGHTING CAPABILITIES. CONCERNING MEXICO, IT CAN BE ESTABLISHED FOR THE FIRST TIME THAT SOME OF THE BROWN HEROIN WHICH COMES INTO THIS COUNTRY FROM MEXICO IS ACTUALLY HEROIN REFINED FROM ASIAN POPPIES. ALL IN ALL, THE NEW DISTRIBUTION ROUTES FROM THE GOLDEN TRIANGLE ARE MAKING THE OLD TURKEY TO MARSEILLES ROUTE SEEM LIKE A COWPATH.

4. THE MAJOR OBSTACLE STANDING IN THE WAY OF CONTROLLING THIS MAJOR ASSAULT ON OUR WAR ON DRUGS IS THE POPPY FIELDS IN BURMA. WE MUST UNDERSTAND THAT THE BURMESE GOVERNMENT IS NOT IN CONTROL OF ALL THE TERRITORY WITHIN THEIR FORMAL BORDERS. THE SHANS CONTROL ROUGHLY 30 PERCENT OF THE LAND, AND IT IS THIS MOUNTAINOUS, JUNGLE AREA WHERE THE POPPIES ARE GROWN.

5. ONCE AGAIN, I WANT TO ASSERT THAT WE HAVE BEEN ABLE TO ENLIST THE EXCELLENT COOPERATION AND SUPPORT OF BRITISH, THAI AND HONG KONG AUTHORITIES IN OUR EFFORT TO COMBAT THE NARCOTICS TRAFFIC. WHAT IS DISAPPOINTING IS THE LACK OF SUPPORT FROM OUR OWN STATE DEPARTMENT. I AM ASKING THE STATE DEPARTMENT TO PRESS THE BURMESE FOR FULL COOPERATION AND ALSO TO WORK OUT SOME WAY OR MEANS OF REACHING THE SHANS, WHO CONTROL THE POPPY FIELDS.

6. THE PROBLEM IS THAT THE STATE DEPARTMENT IS MORE CONCERNED WITH NOT INTERFERING IN THE INTERNAL AFFAIRS OF ANOTHER COUNTRY. I TOO SUPPORT THE RIGHT OF COUNTRIES TO CONTROL THEIR INTERNAL AFFAIRS. BUT IT IS NO LONGER AN INTERNAL MATTER WHEN OPIUM IS REFINED INTO HEROIN

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WHICH MAKES ITS WAY ONTO OUR SHORES, AND INTO THE VEINS OF THE YOUNG PEOPLE OF THIS COUNTRY. THE STATE DEPARTMENT MUST REALIZE THAT OUR RELATIONS WITH OTHER NATIONS ARE NOT AS IMPORTANT AS OUR OWN RELATIONS -- OUR SONS AND DAUGHTERS -- IN THIS COUNTRY.

7. I THINK THIS IS A MATTER OF THE UTMOST IMPORTANCE, AND I AM WORKING TO BRING THIS TO THE ATTENTION OF OFFICIALS AT THE HIGHEST LEVELS OF THE STATE DEPARTMENT AND THE WHITE HOUSE. I AM PERSONALLY WORKING ON SUGGESTIONS TO AID OUR GOVERNMENT IN THIS CRUCIAL AREA -- CONTROLLING THE OPIUM POPPIES IN SHAN CONTROLLED LANDS. HOWEVER, I AM UNABLE TO REVEAL THE EXACT DETAILS OF ONGOING DISCUSSIONS BECAUSE OF THEIR SENSITIVE NATURE.

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## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** X  
**Capture Date:** 01 JAN 1994  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** n/a  
**Control Number:** n/a  
**Copy:** SINGLE  
**Draft Date:** 17 JAN 1975  
**Decaption Date:** 01 JAN 1960  
**Decaption Note:**  
**Disposition Action:** n/a  
**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Authority:** n/a  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:**  
**Disposition Date:** 01 JAN 1960  
**Disposition Event:**  
**Disposition History:** n/a  
**Disposition Reason:**  
**Disposition Remarks:**  
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**Drafter:** CLSTERMER:CB  
**Enclosure:** n/a  
**Executive Order:** N/A  
**Errors:** N/A  
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**Original Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Original Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Original Previous Classification:** n/a  
**Original Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Page Count:** 4  
**Previous Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Previous Classification:** n/a  
**Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Reference:** n/a  
**Review Action:** RELEASED, APPROVED  
**Review Authority:** MorefiRH  
**Review Comment:** n/a  
**Review Content Flags:**  
**Review Date:** 08 MAY 2003  
**Review Event:**  
**Review Exemptions:** n/a  
**Review History:** RELEASED <08 MAY 2003 by SilvaL0>; APPROVED <25 Nov 2003 by MorefiRH>  
**Review Markings:**

Margaret P. Grafeld  
Declassified/Released  
US Department of State  
EO Systematic Review  
05 JUL 2006

**Review Media Identifier:**  
**Review Referrals:** n/a  
**Review Release Date:** n/a  
**Review Release Event:** n/a  
**Review Transfer Date:**  
**Review Withdrawn Fields:** n/a  
**Secure:** OPEN  
**Status:** NATIVE  
**Subject:** WOLFF CALLS FOR STATE DEPARTMENT ACTION ON GOLDEN TRIANGLE HEROIN  
**TAGS:** OVIP, (WOLFF, LESTER)  
**To:** RANGOON BANGKOK  
**Type:** TE  
**Markings:** Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 05 JUL 2006